

THE Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

2023
"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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TRUTH is as a sea, ever presenting a new surface, ever fresh and active, but rarely fathomed. Men wander about its shores and occasionally wade into its limpid waters, but for the most part affect the numerous rivers and inlets where the mixture of the soil with the water mars its balance and obscures its depth. This soil may be compared to error, which in our daily experience is often so inextricably mixed with truth as to be accepted for it. This is more particularly the case in religious matters. The inspired men of old may be likened to syphons connected with the sea of truth; through them its waters have been poured upon the earth in varied volume according to their power, but the theologians who assumed control over these inland lakes have been continually mixing their dogmas and other foreign matter with the waters till, like the rivers and inlets, they are obscured and the truth is hard to find.

If in our daily life the aqueous fluid so necessary to our physical existence is impure, we filter the impurities from it; or, by the addition of a little alum, precipitate the foreign matter, leaving the water clear, wholesome, and potable. Reason is the "alum" which precipitates the error in the rivers of life, and it is largely used by intelligent persons in all matters pertaining to the physical or intellectual portions of our nature; but when they purpose using it in connection with the religious waters, they are warned off, the custodians telling them that the waters being already pure, the "alum" would only have a disturbing and deleterious effect, making them unfit for our spiritual sustenance. Presuming that these men, who have been the hereditary custodians of the waters for so long, must know all about their qualities, reason is set aside, and faith closes their eyes whilst the priest administers the polluted water. Many do not like

the flavour, and doubting the purity of the fluid, open their eyes to discover the adulteration. The vast majority, however, continue to drink, and get so accustomed to it that their tastes become vitiated, and the pure water of truth if offered to them is rejected as a teetotalter would reject alcohol. We do not mean to insinuate that all dispensers of the theological "water of life" are charlatans; far from it, though we have grave suspicions that many of them at least doubt its efficacy and some know it to be unwholesome and deleterious to those to whom they are administering it; still we think that a large majority have inherited and hold a firm faith in its adaptability to the requirements of their flocks, just as many conscientiously believe that the free use of meat and alcoholic stimulants are essential to keep up the physical stamina. We have plenty of instances of the apparent spiritual health and vigour of persons whose religious systems drink only the theological waters, and of the equally apparent physical health of others whose principal beverages are alcoholic and who eat largely of meat. It is questionable, however, in these exceptional cases, whether the health is so perfect in either instance as it would be with a purer *regime*, whilst as a rule we know it to be otherwise.

The man who has emancipated himself from theological thralldom, and tasted the pure waters of spiritual truth, is amazed when he contemplates with open eyes the impurities of the fluid he has been complacently imbibing, and realising the causes of his former blindness, tries to open the eyes of others who are still blindly drinking from the theological fountains. His work, however, is beset with many difficulties, and his efforts are rarely successful; he brings a sample of the purer fluid for them to see and taste, but no sooner do they incline towards it than the priest says, "touch it not, there is poison in the cup; its purity is only in semblance, if you imbibe it will kill your soul." The eyes close again, the head is turned resolutely from it, and the soul is saved from (?)—Progression

Thus it becomes necessary for the reformer to destroy confidence in the priesthood as a preliminary to progress. The iconoclast endeavours to do this by violent attacks upon them and their whole system, but it is much more

effectually accomplished by the steady application of reason, which by precipitating the error in the theological water makes it too apparent to be ignored, and naturally destroys confidence in the infallibility of its purveyors.

This is all that is necessary to be done—give a man the same freedom to think on religious matters that he has on all others, and provided the religious sentiment is fairly developed in his nature, he will inevitably progress towards higher conceptions of God and the destiny of the human race.

HISTORICAL RESEARCHES ON MAGIC,

Translated from the French of Baron Dupotet by
C. W. ROHSER, BENALLA.

THERE is something here, I said to myself, which escapes the reasoning faculties, but which nevertheless exists, for I see besides that the gift of healing diseases—one of the smallest wonders—is exercised through my hands without my comprehending by what means it is accomplished. This led me to the conclusion that if this faculty rested upon a basis of truth, all the rest of the faculties must be equally true. Science henceforth ceased for me to be a final guarantee against error. For had science not denied the reality of the modest works of my hands, although they were a pale reflex of the works of the ancients? If science was mistaken so grossly with regard to the most common facts which were so easy to establish, could it not also be mistaken concerning all the other faculties of the human soul and the properties of life itself?

Proceeding from one reason to another, I reached at last the conclusion that it was my duty to search for the truth without allowing myself to be arrested in my search by any adverse judgment or mere opinion. But who knows the path leading to the truth? The man of science when interrogated on similar subjects remains silent, shows his teeth, and makes a face. A monkey would give a like reply.

"Seek and thou shalt find; ask and it shall be given to thee; knock and it shall be opened to thee."

Where? Whom? How? I did not know, and still the powerful agent, the immortal force, was going through its functions before my very eyes.

Let the revolted ocean throw upon the strand the floating wreck constructed by man's hands to resist its wrath, we might have foreseen such a result and it might have humiliated our pride.

Let the same waves detach and break up tons of rocks which centuries have treated with respect—this does not astonish us.

Let the thunder shake the foundations of the most solid structures and strike terror into the hearts of men—this is only a sublime spectacle, the play of a blind force which man is able to a certain extent to resist.

Let a hurricane throw down and whirl about our habitations, uproot and carry to a distance, trees hundreds of years old—who now is astonished by such an event?

But let an element yet unknown in its nature shake a human being and twist him about like the wind shakes and twists a reed; let this element seize him and fling him to a distance; let this unknown element or force beat or touch him rudely in a thousand different places without its being permitted to him either to see or to defend himself against this new enemy, or to shelter his rights, his liberty, his dignity as a man against this inroad of a mysterious force; let, moreover, this agent have favourites who are not hurt by it, let it apparently obey the power of the human will, to the human voice, to certain tracings or signs, or perhaps to a positive order—then you will hear utterances of scorn, that such things are incomprehensible, that all human reason is and always will be against such matters. Yes, I am afraid human reason will, indeed, for a long time yet be against such speculations. Nevertheless, I beg here to affirm that I believe in these things, that I adopt them as proved, that I have seen them, and that to me they are an abso-

lutely demonstrated truth—a truth never to be shaken by any scientific prejudices or blind opposition of the blind.

I have myself personally felt the attacks of this redoubtable power. One day, surrounded by a large crowd of people, I was making experiments based upon views of my own in connection with Mesmerism, when this power, which some would call the devil, after its evocation, shook my whole being; I fancied I was surrounded by a complete vacuum, and that I was standing in the midst of a slightly coloured vapour. All my senses appeared to have doubled their activity, and what could not be an illusion, my feet were twisted backward in such a manner that it caused me great pain, and my whole body, carried away by a kind of whirlwind, was forced, in spite of my resistance, to obey and to yield to this mysterious power. Other human beings, full of strength and bodily vigour, who had approached the centre of my magical operations (to speak as sorcerer) were still more rudely handled; and it was actually necessary to lay hold of them and fix them upon the ground where they were kicking and writhing in such a manner that the bystanders thought they would expire under the influence of their strange contortions.

The bond was made, the compact fulfilled; an occult influence came to my aid and united itself with my own force, and permitted me for once to see the light.

Thus have I discovered the path which leads to the true magic.

Is this all that I know of the ancient art? No, it is only the commencement of what I have to say about it, and this already suffices to explain and render intelligible the tales about sorcerers, their terrors, their fear of the devil, the numerous and visible bruises and contusions they received, and the unfortunate exit out of this life which they are represented to have sometimes made.

The practice of magic required a strong soul, a resolution which cannot be shaken; poltroonery is not adapted for these kinds of operations, danger must be faced unflinchingly; for even if the devil be only an empty word, it nevertheless represents a force, an agent, a power. Only through, and after, a struggle with that "great" unknown can man arrive at anything. Thus also with ourselves, and at all moments, life struggles against death. Thus only by ruling over its enemy, can life prolong itself; all nature is subject to the same law. Here, moreover, is it necessary to break this obstacle; to subdue first of all the flesh and all carnal lust, so that the force which animates us may pass through the veils of flesh and blood which surround it, and extend its sphere of activity to a distance. It is in this new medium that the soul finds its enemy, but also the new affinities which furnish the power. All that is accomplished is done in this manner, and by these means; it assumes the character of the supernatural, nay, is the very supernatural itself.

Science has an instinctive notion of these mysterious operations, but only for and in the physical order of things; it only arrives at results by destroying the affinities of bodies, by tearing asunder their elements (vivisection); then, laying hold of this or that element, it alters and upsets for a few moments the laws which nature imposes. This no longer surprises anyone, nay, even greater miracles are expected from science, and there is no doubt that science will surprise itself by and by. Has science not also fears? Does she run no risks? On the contrary, all is danger for the men entrusted with the authority of directing its blind forces; for all these forces have a tendency constantly to return to their primitive state, and, to attain this end, they break copper and steel.

Mr. Stephen is doing some wonderful things at Dunedin. The Rev. Dr. Stuart has lent him the Knox Church class room for his public healings, and the account given of one of them in the *Dunedin Morning Herald* of May 1st is simply marvellous. We shall endeavour to find room for it next month.

Drowsiness, biliousness, pains and aches, and ague, Hop Bitters always cures. Read.

INTEMPERANCE AND ITS CAUSES AND REMEDIES.

THE following communication was given impressively to one of our subscribers by a spirit purporting to be that of the author of the *Religio-Medici*;

Contrary to expectation, we come to speak to you of themes other than those which have recently engaged your and our attention. It is concerning the uses of strong drink by those nations of the earth claiming to stand in the foremost ranks of civilisation, that we desire to say a few words to-day. The use of intoxicating liquors is almost as old as the race itself. Natural ferments were discovered at a very early period of human history, and the production of artificial ferments soon followed. Then it was found that these possessed exhilarating properties and influences upon the mind and brain; and thus they speedily became popular. And, as might be naturally expected, they were just as speedily abused; and that, which wisely and moderately employed was a source of refreshment and cheerfulness to mankind, was transformed into one of its direst curses. It is the unfortunate propensity of the race so to act. Its blessings are thus converted into curses, and the benefactions of the Most High, perverted from their original design, are changed into instruments of punishment and occasions of evil. It is necessary that this retribution should overtake the evil-doer, in order that he may learn, from the penalties of his offence, how great is his sin in transgressing the natural laws which have been enacted for his welfare and happiness, and may turn back into the paths of rectitude and obedience. An immoderate indulgence in alcohol is pernicious alike to mind and body;—to the former by injuring and eventually destroying the beautiful instrument by and through which it works; and to the body, by impairing the organs of the stomach as well as the brain and the whole of the nervous system. But much of the drunkenness which prevails is attributable to the unnatural habits of life contracted by the inhabitants of large cities in thickly populated countries. The air they breathe is vitiated and debilitating, the occupations in which they are engaged are too often enfeebling and depressing. All their surroundings are calculated to lower the mental and physical tone of the poorer classes more especially; and a dense fuliginous atmosphere, impervious to the sun's rays, and penetrated and pervaded by the products of imperfect combustion, tends to produce an enervating and dispiriting effect upon those who live and move and have their being in it. Their homes are equally depressing, men and women are conscious of a want of vitality, of a sentiment of joylessness, and of a feeling of despondency and gloom, against which the only counteractive agency that is accessible to them, or that they are perhaps acquainted with, is a fermented liquor, under the excitement of which they are conscious of a temporary elation of spirits, a transitory brightness and activity of mind, a sense of good fellowship, and a momentary forgetfulness of the unloveliness, the gloom, the cheerlessness, and the positive ugliness of their daily lives. For these are indeed very repulsive, and terribly far removed from the grandeur and loveliness of nature, and from all her sweet and soothing influences. Recall to recollection all she has been to you, and the many fountains of happiness you have derived from communion with her in many lands, and under many moods; and then consider for a moment what must be the habitual feelings of those who live in a condition of permanent exile and perpetual estrangement from the bountiful and beneficent mother. No fair visions of a pure and azure sky, of snow-capped mountain and verdant valley, of heaving sea and silvery cataract, of flowery meadow-path and fragrant garden, of fruitful orchard and prolific vineyard, of venerable forest and far-stretching plain—no music of birds, no hum of bees, no buzzing of insect life among the grass, no sweet sound of rustling leaves and rippling brooks to gladden their ears; and none of those secret silent whisperings to the fancy and imagination which nature utters to those who truly love and reverence her as the visible presentment of creative goodness and wisdom, and of which, poets are the truest interpreters. Instead of these delightful sounds and

sights, the poor denizen of a great city is familiar from one week's end to another with squalid objects and dissonant noises. He knows nothing, except by report, of the winsome beauty of nature. He is an alien and a stranger; and the air he breathes, the occupations he pursues, the objects by which he is environed, the workshop in which he labours, the room in which he takes his food, and the chamber in which he lays down his weary limbs to rest at night, all combine to produce a languor and exhaustion of mind and body, a dissatisfaction with his harsh, unattractive, and ungenial lot, which predispose him to fly to the bottle as a refuge from the oppressive and depressing monotony and weariness of his daily life. Hence the enormous, the appalling consumption of intoxicating liquors; and those who, with the best intentions, enter upon a crusade against drunkenness, too often close their eyes to its predisposing causes. They endeavour to lop off some of the branches of the upas tree, instead of striking at its very root. It might almost be said that their kindness occasionally takes the form of cruelty inasmuch as it is directed to deprive the very poor of the only glimpses of cheerfulness and even of happiness they possess. The true method of making war on intemperance would be by removing its temptations and inducements. These are, in very many instances, the wretchedness, the gloom, the squalor and the unhealthiness of the places—it would be wrong to call them homes—which they inhabit. Destroy these and substitute for them cleanly, cheerful, airy, well-ventilated and pleasantly situated residences; and you would find that a material diminution in the demand for, and consumption of, intoxicating liquors would speedily ensue. What immense sums of money you expend on the erection of churches and cathedrals, nominally in honour of Him "who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything" from His creatures; and yet under the very shadow of some of these stately and costly edifices, men, women, and children are grovelling and burrowing in halitations scarcely fit for the reception of swine. Is it not strange, is it not incredible that those who call themselves by the name of Christ should be so completely deaf to his voice—so entirely forgetful of His words, "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" How indeed? In all great cities there are hundreds and even thousands of these brethren, herding together under conditions altogether adverse to health, decency, and cleanliness; while those who could, if they chose, purchase and pull down every one of these shameful tenements, and erect upon their sites homes which would be really homes, stream past them Sunday after Sunday, and fill a building large enough to shelter many scores of these outcasts, which is lying empty and useless all the week. How can they suppose they are offering an acceptable worship to Almighty God, by periodical gatherings there, when they neglect those who are slowly perishing outside?

MR. BROWNE'S PUBLISHING FUND.

THE following sums have been kindly and voluntarily forwarded on account of the above, and are hereby acknowledged with thanks.

From Mr. William Layley, Sandford	£5 0 0
A Friend from a neighbouring colony	10 0 0

Melbourne May 28th, 1884,	£15 0 0
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WE extract the following from the *Wairarapa Daily*, N.Z., of May 12th:—"The Greytown people are rapidly becoming converts to Spiritualism. There are both trance and writing mediums in that township. Spirit circles are drawing young men away from beer and billiards, and creating a marked change in the habits of the rising generation."

THE *Philosophical Inquirer* for March 16th contains an ably written and critical review of Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, by a contributor signing himself N.D., in the course of which he points out some important errors in Mr. Sinnett's statements.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS.

FIFTEEN years ago a few thoughtful people who had satisfied themselves of the basic facts of Spiritualism associated together with the view of opening up and maintaining periodic intercourse with the spirit-world, their object being the spiritual development of the circle—the acquisition of knowledge and enlightenment for themselves, and the diffusion of the latter amongst those whose minds were fitted to receive it. A channel of communication was soon opened, principally by automatic writing, both by hand and planchette, and subsequently trance media were developed. Some of the written communications were published in the early numbers of the *Harbinger*, but the trance addresses not being reported for a considerable time were not preserved. Occasionally, however, a reporter's services were available, and a number of M.S. consisting of lectures and discourses on spiritual, moral, and scientific subjects have accumulated, to which it is deemed desirable to give publicity. The series selected for publication were given during the years 1881-2; the first of them professedly by the spirit of the late John Elliottson, M.D. F.R.S., who when in the body was personally known to one of the oldest members of the circle; the identity, however, of the intelligences who dictated the matter which we intend to publish is of little moment; the communications must be judged by their intrinsic merit, which cannot be enhanced by authority.

SOUL FORCE, &c.

In our efforts to anticipate the discoveries of Science, we must first begin with recognised Science, as by law established. We will therefore put the human being under a microscopic physiological examination, for a twofold purpose; first, to show that there are movements in the human organism referable to no possible operations of matter; next, to prove that the soul, so far from being seated in the brain, will be found to be co-extensive with the whole body.

When the human body is placed under strong microscopic power, it is found to be composed of innumerable small masses of a semi-fluid granular substance, moving with a strange tremulous motion. Upon closer examination each of these bodies will be found to represent an independent living being, exhibiting vital powers, and continually undergoing change of form; and that they are intelligent may be judged from their actions. In them takes place the miraculous change—the wonderful transmutation of nutrient matter into living material. These are the organisms referred to in an introduction to a former communication. These bodies, besides the movements called molecular motion which takes place in them with a constancy and precision of movement, have what are called independent movements; that is, these bodies throw out processes, and retract them again, by which means these bodies are gradually displaced, and a change of position occurs. In that you will understand that they are variable and continually moving organisms. These organisms seem to move independently of each other; but, in reality, their movements are determined by the force of attraction which each exercises on the other. In organic nature, as well as in inorganic nature, every atom is furnished with two poles, one of attraction, one of repulsion, and is therefore a magnet. So strongly does this force of attraction inhere in every atom in nature, that if you could divide the atom, you would have two magnets instead of one; and the greater the number of particles into which you could subdivide them, the greater the number of magnets you would have; so that the force which holds together the atoms of the earth is the same kind of force as that which holds together the atoms which compose the living organism. Stronger in the solid earth than in the water, it is stronger in the solids of the organism than in the fluids—so strong that it is called the force of cohesion. All living organisms are fundamentally composed of these masses. For though nature produces many forms, she has but one mould in which she works—a unitary root, from whence all diversities spring. But, as we ascend the scale of organic forms, their appearance is essentially changed, and also their qualities. They are, in each aggregate, governed by a power which becomes more subtle and complex with every change to a higher form. And as we see the evolution theory written in the successive phases of embryonic life, so each of these organisms bears traces of its ascent; the transmutation of existences which belongs as much to the protoplasmic mass, as to the perfected man; for stamped on each miniature organism, by the law of impression—though as yet no microscope has been constructed powerful enough to reveal it—is its natural history. Now, as nature has but a unitary universal mode for the development of the physical forces, she in no wise departs from this mould in the development of the psychical or pneumatological forces, and the time will

come when there will be discovered movements in the living organism referable to no possible operation of matter—a power causing movements independent of all physical stimuli, and using the multitudinous array of minute organisms (as a commander-in-chief might the forces under his command) to preserve the commonwealth of the body amidst the warfare of existence, whilst in the structure of these organisms will be found aptness or capacity to receive these motions, just as the optical apparatus is found fitted to receive the motions called light. For strife is continually waging everywhere. Therefore strife is continually around you, though the mode of warfare and the scene of battle are often hidden from your view.

To make this somewhat involved explanation more intelligible, the phenomena will be best seen where there is a wound in any outer portion of the body. A resisting medium will be seen to be immediately thrown off, by which oxygen—the destroyer of all organised matter, is almost altogether shut out. Then a number of these minute organisms will be seen to move forward, by the process previously spoken of, and will throw off formed material; it may be a portion of a muscle, or it may be continuing an artery here, or forming a nerve there, or drawing on the insentient material around them; fibrin, albumen, or gelatinous material is thrown off, until the cavity is completely filled up. Their actions will be seen to take place with a constancy and precision of movement unlike the other organisms which compose the rest of the body; their activities, also, will be seen to be counteracted and neutralised at given points, until neither too much nor too little is reproduced upon the exact line of injury. These facts exhibit thought, and occur without the cognisance of the sufferer, the unconscious mental life—unconscious, that is to say, in so far as the little organisms are concerned—intelligence governing the animal intelligence, until the injured plan of the body is restored. Though the body plays the most important part from an executive point of view, yet it is manifestly under the direction of mind.

We have passed almost insensibly from the known to the unknown; but science has still greater facts to reveal to man. Along the nervous system pass circular currents which under the microscope as yet yield no evidence; but the time will come when they will be seen to arise from different points in the nervous system. Then, if their course be followed, they will be found to traverse a portion, or all parts, of the body; acting on the magnetic powers of these organisms, and causing a partial or general displacement, and rousing the activities of the nervous system, just as galvanism applied to the inanimate forms of the anthropoid apes, throwing them into the various attitudes of attack, or defence, of veneration or of fear; forces which though acting through the vital powers of the system, are yet distinct from it. These spiral movements, in one direction, will be found to depress, and in another to raise the vital powers of the system, and these currents, so far from being generated by external stimuli, will be seen to traverse the system in opposition to external circumstances, in opposition to all physical stimuli. Scientists will then cease to confound forces with motions. These waves of force, passing through every fibre in the organism, may be seen issuing from the innumerable pores of the body, and, attracting certain vital properties along with them, the human being will be found to be enveloped in a cloud of magnetic phenomena, just as the earth is enveloped in its atmosphere. It is by the thought of the soul impressed upon these waves of force that the actor possesses the power of moving his audience to laughter or to tears. It is by throwing off these waves of magnetic force, that a popular leader may sway the masses, a fanatic found a sect, or an itinerant preacher cause a revival demonstration. But, when knowledge increases on the earth, then men's inventive genius will contrive higher means of revealing the unseen, for the microscope as improved will reveal, not the soul, for that no human eye shall ever behold, but the action of forces which will reveal the existence of the soul. Then the materialistic scientist will exclaim—"I can no longer doubt the existence of the spiritual principle in man, and that it can exist apart from matter, for it reigns supreme

in its divine right; and that it is the intersphering of souls which causes the highest progress on earth."

As the forces of the body and soul pass and repass each other, each impresses its form upon the other. The life of the soul is impressed upon the body, and the life of the body upon the soul. For this law of impression prevails wherever forces act; and as man's body is transmitted to him by his ancestors, so also is his soul—a much more rational and natural conception of the growth of humanity than that a fresh soul is created for each embryo—and bound up in the inherited organisation are vestiges of the impressions of the lives of departed ancestors. For every atom in the brain and nervous system has a memory of former existences; characters mental and physical are thus transmitted, and some ancestral trait or feature speaks out to show that mind and body may be predetermined ages before birth. We thus see the persistence of certain types, in reappearing long after every vestige of the mental and physical characteristics which had distinguished the type had disappeared. Mental and physical characteristics lying latent—put to sleep as it were—for many generations, reappear enhanced or intensified in the offspring, it may be by the introduction of a stimulating force; these forces making in all what is called the sum of the conditions of life. These are facts which daily present themselves, both in the human and animal kingdoms. Not that the atoms which compose the organisation of the offspring existed previously in the bodies of ancestors, for force ever repeats itself; physical forces beget physical forces, and mental forces their like. There is an inheritance of the mind, even as of the body.

With regard to the much vexed question of the re-appearance of certain types, the equilibrium towards which the force tended has been that of stability. But, interfered with by other forces, the equilibrium of instability has prevailed. Then, again, these elements may be so controlled, counteracted, or neutralised, as to produce a new type, which in time may become permanent—that is, attain the equilibrium of stability. And we often see transmitted with the mental and physical characteristics, vestiges of the most vivid impressions produced by the most striking events in the lives of ancestors—impressions scarred into the soul—and under favorable opportunity, we see from the influence of external things, the unconscious becomes conscious, and these impressions reappear. It may be that the form of some landscape, associated with pleasure or pain, awakens like emotions even in a remote offspring—for we can place no limit to the duration of these impressions—until the individual fancies that in some former existence he has visited the same scene, and felt more keenly than the emotions he feels so vaguely now. It may be at the sight of some faded ancient portrait, or some antique costume, that these impressions start into life, and combining, the imagination fills in the details, and the mind weaves from them the panorama of a past existence. It may be of some great historical event, or some dire tragedy of life, in which the ancestor has played a conspicuous part. But when the mind is withdrawn from the world, these impressions start up unbidden and unlooked for, like the spectres of a dead and gone age, until the mind is filled with the shadows of a past existence, and the individual believes he has lived a different life to the one in which his lot is now cast. These facts are the origin of the Reincarnation theory. Its claims to validity can now be very briefly considered.

But there is a Reincarnation hypothesis gaining ground rapidly in the spiritual world, even among the higher intelligences. If you ask me what verification have I to offer, I answer none, save such as the study of the developments of cosmical physics affords. I will place it before you, and you can accept or reject it, or like myself you will neither accept or reject, but wait until the future discoveries of Science confirm or disprove. Infinity and Eternity are words continually in use upon earth, though no mind can conceive their precise signification. Matter is said to be eternal; force is said to be eternal; nature is said to bring forth an infinite variety of forms; the universe is said to be infinite in extent; throughout the heavens we behold worlds struggling into

existence. The dimmest, smallest speck in the sword-handle of Orion contains galaxies of worlds in different stages of development; throughout the heavens there are innumerable worlds and worlds in different stages of decay, worlds from which all life has departed. Acted on by the forces which surround them, they are melting into the elements. All things, as the things they are, have had an existence; and all things—as the things they are—must pass away. To return to that tiny speck upon the infinite ocean of azure, the earth, it has had a birth, an infancy, it will have its period of maturity; it will grow hoary with age, all life will depart from it; it too will melt into the elements. There will come a time when the sun will cease to shine, when the planets of the solar system—as planets they are now—will pass away. If I say to you, this may occur in a hundred millions, or five hundred millions of years, what understanding have you of it? What is a hundred millions of years in the life of a world? As a hairsbreadth in the diameter of the earth. But there will come a time when a new sun and planets will appear, with a glory far beyond the present glory—a splendor which you cannot conceive—transmuted in substance whilst the principle remains the same. Then the spirit-world may be merged into the new planetary existences. Passing on in our life as it removes us at last from the emotions, and makes of existence but a frigid series of intellectual phenomena. A more majestic creation, or transmutation—for creation it will not be—more majestic than the sun and worlds which you know of, loftier forms of existence through which we may all approach nearer to the conditions of the Eternal and the Infinite, and it may be yet again passing on to loftier creations, higher forms of existence, where the most lofty imagination cannot follow, where no thought can reach their state. Everything bears traces of existence in a life before that of your world. Before matter—as you know it—was, the laws of impression and correspondence existed. These laws are eternal and unchangeable. It is only the forms in which they act that are temporary and changeable. All things have but a transitory existence. They come, they pass, and are gone. Gone as the forms of the things they were, to reappear in greater majesty and glory; immanent power, ever unfolding progression, instead of the dead stabilisation of things—more wonderful transmutations, more majestic forms of existence—through which we may approach nearer to the Eternal and unchangeable One.

This succession of existences recalls to my mind the facts that we are now at the closing sitting of the year. This year is begotten of the last, even as the next will be born of this. Death has made gaps in the crowds of human life, but the new-comers have more than filled up the void. Still there are dear departed ones missed. Death everywhere pressing upon life. During the past year nations have sung odes to liberty, whilst their every action has been fettered with the chains of slavery, and whilst the iron of oppression has entered into their souls, but goading them on to wring greater concessions from their rulers. Brows which last year were stainless, and looking heavenward, are now bent to earth with shame. Light hearts have grown heavy, and weary burdens have pressed on aching shoulders. Many burdens have been lifted. Many have been rescued from their lives of degradation. New ties have been formed; old ties have been broken. Words have been said, and actions have been done, which not a lifetime could recall or undo. Seeds of good and evil have been sown, never again to be uprooted. The seeds of knowledge have been thrown broadcast on the world, some to be lost, and some to bear fruit a thousandfold. Truth has progressed, and our circle is not behind-hand in the march of enlightenment. We have done what we could. The rest, dear friends of earth, remains with you.

I will now make a few concluding remarks. It is a law of mathematics, that if the mathematician wishes to ascertain the value of an unknown quantity, he shall look in the data of the problem for a number of known quantities equal to the unknown, and the sum of these quantities determines the value of the unknown quantity. In my study of the mind and body, I have made this rule my guide. Accepting unquestionably, as all must

sooner or later, the truth of the evolution theory, I have searched in the two great empires of nature, the organic and the inorganic, for facts which will throw light upon the problems of mind and body, and give a solution of the mystery of human existence. In man we find the force of attraction appearing, the force of impression, a correspondence to external Nature, for in man we find all the phenomena which characterise the rest of Nature, so that from a psychological as well as a physiological point of view he deserves the name so often bestowed upon him of microcosm. In the lowest form of organic life we find a special cause which becomes more specialised as we ascend the scale of Nature, until in man we find special groups of phenomena referable only to a special and complex cause. All the forces of external nature are found combined in him, and their phenomena are repeated in a higher form, producing a loftier existence proceeding from a higher cause. The contents of the structureless sac, the germ of the lowest form of organic life, in no wise differs from the germ-cell of human life, as far as microscopic or analytical researches will reveal: but from the first movement towards development differentiation is seen to occur. Therefore, the differences in development must be due to the differences in the immaterial principles within. The question now comes—have animals souls? I answer, I believe they have. The question then arises—does the argument for immortal life hold good for animals? I answer it is a scientific axiom that nothing which has ever existed can cease to be. Even the atom is immortal. Change of form all must undergo. Nothing remains constant to the one existence. Instead of the stabilization of nature, a dead unchanging state of things, there is an ever-moving ever progressing state of things, a transmutation of existence, which shows that the equilibrium of instability is God's divinest gift to all his creation. At last I think I have proved from the hard unyielding lips of science the immortality of the soul.

I now bring my present series to a close. At some future time I may take up the thread of these discourses, and weave fresh knowledge from them. It has given me unspeakable pleasure to have given you such communications. I have had many difficulties to contend with during this course of communications, one of the greatest being the selection of appropriate language which, simple and intelligible to all so that no-one's mind might be wearied nor their understanding vexed, would yet be comprehensive enough to explain some of the abstrusest problems of existence. There are some who doubtless will bring against these communications the charge of inconsistency. To such I say the inconsistency is in your misinterpretation of my words and thoughts. If you look through damaged spectacles, good friends, you must expect to find flaws. Force not a meaning on my words which was never intended; the fault is in yourselves.

A charge has been brought by many Secularists that spiritual communications have not enriched the stock of human knowledge. To such I would say, before you make that charge again, read these lectures carefully and thoughtfully. Ponder well upon them, and try to realise the knowledge in them. Crude and imperfect though they may be, yet they are destined to work much good in the future, both in your world and ours; and at this thought a profound and holy calm seems to fall upon me, a peace which passeth all human understanding.

Good night. Peace go with you. May every enjoyment be yours.

January 1882.

A NEWSPAPER SCRAP.

TRUE RELIGION.

Living friendly, feeling friendly,
Acting fairly to all men;
Seeking to do that to others,
They may do to me again.

Hating no man, scorning no man,
Wronging none by word or deed,
But forbearing, soothing, serving,
Thus I live, and this my creed.

THE DRIFT OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

THE following excerpt from *The Christian World* (London), of March 15th, is a significant indication of the progressive tendencies existing amongst congregational teachers. Many of them are evidently inclined to accept the altered condition of things, and if not to lead, at least to keep level with their flocks in travelling up the hill of progress. Some time since we read a lecture in exact harmony with this, given by a Presbyterian minister to the Christian Young Men's Association at Paisley; and instances of the same tendency are to be found in all the other churches. Nothing will do more to spoil the trade of the professional iconoclast than the spread of these sentiments:—

At the annual conference of the Lancashire Congregational Union, held at Henry-street Chapel, Bury, a few days ago, a paper was read by the Rev. J. B. Aitken, of Rochdale, on "The influence of present phases of theological thought upon the life and work of the Church," in which the prevailing tendency towards broader conceptions of the relations of God and man were strikingly set forth. After remarking that although churches were naturally inclined to minimise the changes that were in progress, it was not wise to ignore them, especially if they came from within the pale of the Church, Mr. Aitken pointed out that it was one of the features of the present theological movement that it did not care to formulate a creed lest it should shackle the mind, or appear to give finality of form to truth. An initial characteristic of the new theology was a wider and freer interpretation of Scripture, altered views of inspiration, laying stress upon the spirit rather than the letter of Scripture teaching. The light of reason, the light of nature—in other words, of science, and, not least in the problem, the light of the moral sense, shed upon the page amplified interpretations, and, therefore, amplified the conceptions of God and of God's relations to man. It resulted in a Fatherhood becoming the primary conception of God. Modern eschatology, too, Mr. Aitken went on to point out, was far less dogmatic than that which was formerly held. There was no moral gulf recognised between the worlds; the moral relations subsisting now between God and man were viewed as subsisting throughout the ages. While to such modes of thought the forensic methods of viewing the Atonement were utterly impossible, the fact of it was recognised in all its spiritual and mysterious significance, and the Divine glory of Christ stood undimmed. The present movement was reverent. It did not discredit the Scriptures, but only supplied faith with methods of interpretation. It was not materialistic, but deeply spiritual. That modern phases of belief were already operative within the Churches was beyond question, and that the influence must become very clearly manifest before long was a truth to which thoughtful Christians were becoming every day awake. Having referred to the weakening of the denominational sentiment which resulted from these changes, Mr. Aitken remarked that in the present phases of theological thought there might be a powerful antidote to the adverse influences which surrounded the Church and threatened their common Christianity. Multitudes on the basis of this remoulded theology were finding a firm standing ground, who would otherwise be parted altogether from their faith. They conceived faith and reason as clasping hands, and all that was dearest was ensured as dear to them still. In so far as these phases of thought were a form of blessing, and they had no right to think that those influenced by them would be less spiritual and less earnest than if they had a more elaborate creed. Foundation truths might be better or more widely discerned than in the past; the platform of faith might permit more freedom concerning matters of opinion, might cause a greater spirit of charity to prevail, and create a unity of spirit which was not observed to-day. A vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Aitken for his paper, and very general concurrence with his views was expressed by the ministers present.

DR. MUNGER, in his American letter to the *Christian World*, charges the Rev. Joseph Cook with an undue leaning towards Spiritism in his Boston lectures! If the charge is well founded, Joseph must have changed his attitude of late.

RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN HEAVEN.

BY AN OCCASIONAL REPORTER.

ON the evening of Thursday, the 1st ult., the Rev. C. J. Byng, of St. Luke's, delivered a lecture to a crowded audience at the Temperance Hall, North Fitzroy, on the subject of "Recognition of Friends in Heaven," from a Biblical standpoint. At the conclusion of his address Mr. H. J. Browne, who was present, rose and moved a vote of thanks to the reverend gentleman, and in a short speech which he made he complimented the lecturer on his evidently deep scriptural research on the subject treated of, also on his wonderful power of memory in quoting verse after verse and giving chapter and verse without the slightest hesitation and without any reference to notes. Mr. Browne proceeded to say that, although the lecturer and he had arrived at their conclusions on this subject through different channels, there was much in the lecture which he could endorse, but there were some points on which he could not agree. He claimed to have an advantage over the lecturer, who merely philosophised, while he, Mr. Browne, presumptuous as it might appear, could speak from knowledge on the subject. He was aware that probably he would have the finger of scorn pointed at him for making such an assertion, but the means of obtaining that knowledge were as open to the lecturer and all present as to him, the only difference was that he had availed himself thereof while they had not. He agreed with Mr. Byng that heaven and hell were states of mind, but he could not do so when the lecturer afterwards maintained that a certain locality constituted the kingdom of heaven, and he quoted from the Bible the following passage in corroboration of his views, "The kingdom of God is within you." He maintained that each individual took his own heaven or his own hell with him when he entered the inner-life. Then as to the other world being divided into two parts, as stated by the lecturer, he also differed with him in this, and quoted the words ascribed to Jesus, "In my Father's house are many mansions," as corroborative of his views on this point. Again, the lecturer inferred that there was no redemption beyond the grave, and drew the awful picture of a righteous mother enjoying the delights of heaven while she was aware that her son, whom she loved so tenderly and devotedly when on earth, was suffering indescribable and irremediable torments in hell. From such a horrible idea as this Mr. Browne declared his dissent, and said that he agreed with the Bishop of Melbourne, who had stated that "moral probation ceaseth not with this life," and Mr. Browne remarked that it was well it was so, for the best as well as the worst of us. Not wishing to detain the meeting longer, he concluded by moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Byng for his interesting lecture. On its being seconded by another of the audience, Dean Macartney, who was in the chair, rose, evidently not in a very Christian spirit, and declared that in no place in the Bible are we led to believe that moral probation ceaseth not with this life, and called upon the mover of the vote of thanks to give them "a sign" of the truth of his asserted revelations by standing at the mouth of the open grave and calling the dead to life again, as Jesus had done (see Matth. XVI. 1 to 33). As the meeting broke up Mr. Browne handed some pamphlets to the lecturer, and distributed a few tracts on "The Evidences of Spiritualism" to the audience one of whom after accepting a tract, in order to show the Christian spirit by which he was actuated, and manifest his love for his supposed enemy, tore it up in Mr. Browne's face, who addressing him, said, "Why, if you did not want it, could you not have returned it to me? I would not have acted in such a manner towards you."

[We should like to ask Dean Macartney if there is no redemption in the life to come, and if it is true that as a tree falleth so it lieth represents the unprogressive nature of the future life, what object could Jesus have had when, after entering the spirit-world, "he went and preached unto the spirits in prison," or in the darkness of ignorance as it has been rendered? Was it merely to tantalize these unfortunate spirits? If so, there must be

at least retrogression in Dr. Macartney's heaven, if there is no progression, and this is borne out in the simile of the fallen tree, which in time rotteth. As to the Dean's and the Bishop's opposite views, we would remark, "When Drs. differ who's to agree?"—Ed.]

The following is an extract from the *Herald's* report of Mr. Byng's lecture:—

"The most remarkable feature of the evening was certainly the speech made by a gentleman who moved the vote of thanks to Mr. Byng. From the attention paid him he seemed to be one of the pillars of the church, but his observations were most heterodox, and quite traversed some of the lecturer's positions. After a prophetic tribute of admiration to the lecturer he proceeded to assert coolly that there was no hell, and that hell only existed in the human bosom. There was a vague suspicion about his remarks, too, involving the corollary that there was no heaven. A number of ladies walked straight out in the midst of his observations, which was a decided fly in the ointment. He asserted that Bishop Moorhouse had declared in favor of a state of probation after death."

Dean Macartney felt it incumbent on himself to get up and correct the presumption of this elder—if such he be. The Dean, with much suavity, brought the Bible down upon the speaker's head, figuratively speaking."

NINETEENTH CENTURY MIRACLES.*

SOME fifteen years since was published in Boston U.S.A., the first connected history of Modern Spiritualism in America, with portraits and biographical sketches of its leading advocates during the twenty years of its existence. The prominent position of the author, Miss Emma Hardinge, (now Mrs. Britten), her ability and large acquaintance with leaders and workers in the movement, peculiarly fitted her for the task, and the volume had a world-wide circulation. From time to time Mrs. Britten has promised to carry forward the work, but more pressing duties prevented her entering upon the task until last year, when she definitely announced the intended publication of a further fifteen years' history under the title of "Nineteenth Century Miracles." It was published early this year in London and Manchester simultaneously, and the first edition of 2,000 we are informed all taken up within two months.

In this volume the history is not confined to America, but includes the rise and progress of Spiritualism in Great Britain, Germany, France, Australia, New Zealand, Polynesia, India, Holland, Russia, America North and South, and other countries. The first section is devoted to German Spiritualism, and necessarily goes over much of the same ground traversed by Mrs. Howitt Watts in her recently published biography of Justinius Kerner. It introduces, however, an interesting personal narrative given by one of Dr. Kerner's sensitives to Mrs. Britten. The second section refers to France, and here, as in Germany, Mesmerism seems to have been the stepping stone to Spiritualism. Billot, Cahagnet, Dupotet, and Delucze being its *avant couriers*.

Allan Kardec is looked upon as the founder of religious Spiritism in France, and his numerous volumes of highly philosophical matter have exercised a powerful influence in the development of Spiritism on the Continent of Europe. From the first he has taught the doctrine of reincarnation, and it has been very generally accepted as a part of the religion by his numerous disciples. It is generally supposed that he wrote either by impression or direct spirit assistance the various works bearing his name, but Mrs. Britten reproduces a long letter from M. Aksakof, which goes to show that the author at least of the "Spirit's Book," and something more, was a Madame Celina Japhet, who was the medium of a circle to which Kardec was introduced in 1856; and that the latter having possession of the papers retained them and utilised them without Madame Japhet's consent. For a time there were two parties and two representative papers, *Revue Spirite*, of Allan Kardec, and *La Revue Spiritualiste*, edited by an energetic Spiritualist and medium, M. Peirart; the latter, however, seems to have been selected as a victim for persecution, and through

* "Nineteenth Century Miracles; or Spirits and their Work in every Country of the Earth." A complete Historical compendium of the Great Movement known as Modern Spiritualism, by Emma Hardinge Britten. Manchester: Wm. Britten. London: W. E. Allen.

the influence of the Jesuits his paper was suppressed. Kardec remained unmolested and pursued his work steadily till his death, which occurred in 1869.

Flammarion the astronomer, Victor Hugo, Dumas, and Sardou, the authors, have been substantial pillars to Spiritualism in France, the latter having been a member of the original circle at which the "Spirits Book" was received.

Passing over the lengthy and deeply interesting history of Spiritualism in Great Britain, we come to Spiritualism in Australia; this is taken up from the period when it began to attract public attention in 1867, at which time a prolonged correspondence appeared in a suburban paper, followed by lengthy articles in the Melbourne *Argus*—the publication of Miss Armstrong's "communications," Mr. Naylor's and Mr. Tyerman's public advocacy, the advent and doings of Chas. Foster, the Davenportes, Dr. Slade and Mrs. Ada Foye, George Spriggs, wonderful materialisations, Dr. Peebles and Mrs. Britten's great lecturing campaigns.

The leaders of, and workers in, the movement in Victoria and New South Wales are described, and incidents connected with the famous Energetic Circle, and Robert Brown's mediumship are given; also, a biographical sketch of the editor of this journal. This portion is illustrated with portraits of the late John Bowie Wilson, Mr. George Spriggs, and Mrs. Ada Foye. Following this are accounts of Spiritualism in New Zealand, Polynesia, South America, and India; in the latter, the occult theories are examined and contrasted with the Spiritualistic ones. Mrs. Britten, who was one of the earliest members of the council of the Theosophical Society, justifies the introduction of some extracts from "Fragments of Occult Truth," as follows:

"The article in question has been reprinted, first, as an item of information concerning the environment of the movement which this work is designed to describe; next, that the readers of the Spiritual journals, who must have seen many 'fragments' of so-called 'Occultism' forced on their attention, might derive from a sufficiently clear statement a knowledge of what 'Theosophical Occultists' teach; and next, to warn the practical seeker for truth to beware how he leaves the foundation of well-demonstrated facts to launch out on the ocean of vague speculative theory."

Like all those who have had large experience of Esoteric Spiritualism, the author is unable to accept the "shell" theory of the Occultists. "Give me" (she says)

"One shadow of proof to convince me that the pure and holy spirit with whom I have been conversing is a shell, a 'ghost,' a *reliquie* of the dead, and not my mother herself; give me proofs as strong as I can bring to show that it is my mother herself; that death has had no power over her, and that with all the difficulties under which the spiritual telegraph works, there is not one shadow of evidence to doubt that it is my real, veritable mother; bring me proof for proof, and testimony for testimony, or set my facts against your theories, and see which will weigh the strongest, especially when my facts are duplicated by the facts of millions of others, and your theories have yet to produce one demonstrable fact to rest upon."

In the second section of Indian Spiritualism there are some interesting extracts from the experiences of M. Jacolliot with a Fakir named Covindasamy, who produced most marvellous phenomena, who in answer to the former's question as to the means by which they were produced replied "I call on the souls of my forefathers, and it is they who use their power, and whose instrument I am." Dr. Perty says: "Various Fakirs whom Jacolliot questioned on the same point gave nearly the same answers."

In the concluding portion a tribute is paid to the late Peary Chand Mittra, and his work for Spiritualism is the East.

In Spiritualism in Holland there is an account of a séance given to the queen of that country by Mr. Home, from which it appears that Her Majesty fully accepted the fact of spirit intercourse, and that Mr. Home is in possession of a memento from her to that effect.

In Russia, Spiritualism has uphill work on account of the surveillance of the press; it has, however, at least two doughty champions in the persons of the Hon. A. Aksakof and Professor Boutlerof, and more recently, Professor Wagner.

In conservative Spain, Spiritualism has made substantial progress, and in spite of the determined opposition of the priests who got up an *auto da fe* of its literature; no less than five papers devoted to the subject are now published in that country.

The last 120 pages are devoted to a *resumé* of American Spiritualism during the last fifteen years, which though replete with interesting matter, space forbids our quoting from. No person who has read Mrs. Britten's "Modern American Spiritualism" should be without this book, which is an essential supplement to it. An American edition, containing some additional portraits, was to be published in May, and will probably arrive here in July.

STRAY ECHOES

I RECOLLECT reading somewhere, a few years back, that if Spiritualism continued making headway it would prove a great revolutionary power socially. If I may judge from a few acquaintances of mine who are Spiritualists I think the prediction has a likelihood of being fulfilled, for I notice they all have a decided leaning towards views which Conservatives describe as "communistic," and Radicals as "advanced ideas." I find my friends read with avidity such works as Henry George's "Progress and Poverty," and Prof. Wallace's "Nationalisation of the Land." Well, whether or not the views advocated by these gentlemen will be realised in our time, I have but little doubt but that the day is near at hand when "the dark and living chaos of ignorance and hunger" will assert at least some of its moral rights.

Having occasionally a little experience in impressional writing myself I sometimes fancy I can detect the work of the spirits in the productions of some authors. The following passage, for instance, from Dickens' Christmas Carol, strikes me as having been the outcome of impression, as it embodies a lesson which I have had repeatedly taught me by some spirit friends. It is the wail of Marley's ghost over his lost opportunities;—"Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but drops of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business." A hard lesson to learn in an age of limitless greed.

A prominent medical gentleman lately left for Europe, and had given him before leaving a complimentary banquet. Customary as such a course was, it gave serious offence to the *Victorian Banner*, a paper devoted to the antiquated object of fanning into temporary energy the dying embers of Protestant fanaticism and bigotry. The reader will, no doubt, be astounded to learn that the sole cause of the *Banner's* umbrage lay in the fact that the recipient of the banquet was a member of the Catholic Church. I feel confident that such a specimen of benighted bigotry could not be found even amongst the most illiterate peasants in the west of Ireland. The fault-finding paragraph was written in the vulgar and offensive style which invariably emanates from dwarfed minds—the natural homes of bigotry. If I mistake not, this enlightened organ is the mouth-piece of a small clique of virulently bigoted Protestants, one of whose meetings was recently described by the *Argus* as "a Protestant debauch."

AMERICAN papers recently received contain detailed accounts of the seizure and detection of Henry C. Gordon, who has for a considerable time been giving highly successful materialisation séances. The whole of his paraphernalia, by the help of which he imposed upon the public, was produced in court, and the evidence being clear against him, he and his confederate were committed for trial, and in default of bail (\$1200) were removed to prison. In another case of fraudulent materialisation, Mrs. Hannah V. Ross: a domestic quarrel between the confederates caused the imposition to be revealed. There seems to be quite a number of "Bogus" mediums in the States, though a section of the Spiritualists, headed by Col. Bundy of the *Religio Philosophical Journal*, have been diligently working at their detection and exposure for some years past.

IS SPIRITUALISM CREDIBLE?

By H. J. BROWNE.

A paper read at the Scots Church Literary Association, Melbourne, on Wednesday Evening, 7th May, 1884, in reply to an essay, bearing the above title, read by another member at a previous meeting.

"The world hath felt a quick'ning breath
From heaven's eternal shore,
And souls triumphant over death
Return to earth once more."

Ladies and gentlemen,—The title of the essay read here this evening fortnight was, "Is Spiritualism credible?" To which I reply emphatically, "It is;" and how those who believe in ancient spiritual manifestations can, with any pretence to consistency, deny their occurrence now, is to me a perfect anomaly. More especially so when we have the authority in favour thereof of those upon whom believers in ancient spiritual phenomena place implicit trust. Is it not written: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. . . . The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom: to another, the word of knowledge by the same spirit; to another faith by the same spirit; to another the gifts of healing; . . . to another, prophecy; to another the interpretation of tongues," etc. Are we not also told to "try the spirits," to "believe not every spirit," and to beware of deceiving spirits? also that "hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending." "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit; and they shall prophecy; and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath," etc.?

Unless it can be demonstrated that the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, are changeable, or that formerly man possessed a faculty which nature has since withdrawn, if it is true that a spirit removed the chains from Peter's limbs and unlocked the prison doors, and if another spirit or angel rolled away a stone from the grave of the crucified Jesus, why, let me ask, should not spirits in our day be able to do equally wonderful acts? Again, if a spirit could show himself to John on the Island of Patmos, and talk to him, why should it be impossible for spirits to do likewise in our day to those who, in accordance with the Scriptures, have cultivated their spiritual gifts, consequently can discern spirits, etc.

The objection to the reception of this modern revelation of the truth arises, in a great measure, from the undue reverence to the authority of the past, and the utter repudiation on the part of many, of the present active, living, principle of God's ever operative guidance through the guardian angelship of His ministering spirits. The same objection has, however, been exhibited in all ages of the world upon the revelation of any new truth in science, philosophy, or religion. This antagonism to anything not in accord with popular opinion, has always been characteristic of the living age, and was exhibited in the time of the Great Teacher when the unbelieving Pharisees exclaimed, "We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is!" And they who to-day ridicule the manifestations and reject the teachings of modern Spiritualism, would, eighteen hundred years ago, have stoned the apostles.

One of the principal reasons why Spiritualism is so little understood by the generality of people, is on account of the opposition shown to it by the priesthood of the various sects, because it lets in the light of spiritual truth, demonstrates the impartiality of God's love for all His creatures, and proves the rational character of the life to come; and because it exposes to view the erroneous nature of many of the dogmas that have been added to the simple religion of love and good works as taught by the worthy Nazarene, who is represented as having declared that love to God and love to man com-

prised all the law and the prophets; and this we find illustrated in the parable of the good Samaritan.

It appears to me that the reason why some people object to investigate Spiritualism, is that they are afraid to have the truth of immortality demonstrated to them; and in case the real conditions of the inner life may not coincide with the views they entertain regarding the life to come. For my own part I prefer facts to fiction, and consider knowledge preferable to mere belief, but I am aware that all minds are not constituted alike. Those, whom the reasons mentioned will not debar from investigating and who are not afraid of public opinion, who will sit down in their own homes with their own families, or intimate friends of the family circle, need have no fear of experiencing that deception and imposture of which they have heard so much. I have no doubt of the results if they will only do so, as mediumship is much more general than is popularly supposed; it is lying latent in many, only requiring development, and is a natural gift, like that of the poet or painter, which is highly prized when once its value is appreciated.

The Church, as you are aware, has persistently closed its doors against the spirit-world, so until it opens them for the reception of spiritual truth, churchmen need not ask why their spirit-friends do not come and communicate with them.

There is, I maintain, no logical standpoint between Spiritualism and Materialism; all between these rests on mere assertion and credulity. If there is another world, as Spiritualism demonstrates there is, surely nothing is more natural than that there should be the means of communication between the two worlds, and nothing more unreasonable than that people should refuse to avail themselves of this grand avenue of knowledge. Those who have not investigated Spiritualism know little of the joy and pleasure which, owing to their false prejudice, they debar themselves from. And who, let me ask, are the people who denounce Spiritualism, but those who know little or nothing about it, owing to their never having examined it carefully, as they ought to do before passing an opinion upon it? for, as Solomon remarks, "He that answereth a matter before he hearth it, it is folly and shame unto him." Surely those who have for many years carefully and prayerfully investigated the subject are more competent to form a correct opinion regarding it than are those who, without examination, deny the occurrence of modern spiritual manifestations, while they, at the same time, inconsistently believe in their occurrence in former time, merely on the testimony of others, without even a particle of demonstration as to their truth?

In this skeptical age what does the world require to convince mankind that a future life rests not on mere speculation as Materialists assert? Is it not evidence of the fact of man's continued existence beyond the portals of the tomb; proof palpable of a life to come? To the credulous who rely on the opinions of others, it may be all very well to say that we have the testimony of this or that writer in biblical times that death does not end all, and that if they won't believe the Scriptures neither will they believe if one rose from the dead; but to those who think for themselves testimony is not proof, and such a reply is only a palpable evasion of the great question, "If a man die shall he live again?" Where can an answer to this be obtained but through communion with those who, having passed through the change called death, can speak from actual, personal experience.

To object to modern Spiritualism on the ground that we have no need of evidence of a life to come, is to insult reason, to mock the deepest yearnings of human nature, and to ignore the entire religious history of the world. And further, it is only a rational faith, supported by actual knowledge such a Spiritualism supplies, that can restore a vitalising religion in the minds of men. As has been truly remarked, "Knowledge supports when faith fails;" therefore I advise the thoughtful to investigate Spiritualism and put themselves in communication with those who can really inform them of the best way to prepare for the great change which must sooner or later come upon us all.

But some may ask, "Can this really be done?" Yes,

it not only can, but is being done in every civilised quarter of the globe through those who have cultivated their spiritual gifts. "Is it possible that we can hear from our dear departed ones?" asks another. Yes, I again answer, when the necessary conditions are complied with. "What are these conditions?" may probably be asked. To which I reply, they are very simple, but it may take some time before satisfactory results are obtained; this, however, is not always the case.

The following question may here suggest itself—"How is it that the demonstration of man's continued existence does not come to all without being sought for?" Because if it did so, without exertion, it would not be valued. It is the difficulty experienced in obtaining the precious metals and gems that causes them to be so prized, and it is the same with that most precious gem of all—the truth of immortality; the value of which can only be appreciated by those who, after years of earnest study and patient investigation, have attained unto a knowledge of it. To reject this priceless gem because of the mass of nonsense, falsehood, imposture, and fraud which have been mixed up with it, is as unreasonable as it would be to refuse to accept gold or diamonds on account of the mullock or wash-dirt out of which they have been extracted.

Another question frequently asked is—"If Spiritualism is true, how are not the discoveries of physical science anticipated by it?" Because if it did so it would rob man of one of the blessings of life, viz.: the incentive to search after knowledge. The true province of Spiritualism is the education of man in things pertaining to spiritual life, and thereby to fit him to enter therein at the change called death.

Spiritualism is not a religion or system of faith and worship, as is generally supposed? It is the science of continuous life—a science of observation from which each investigator has to draw his own conclusions; in the same way as a student of one of the physical sciences draws his own deductions from facts presented to his senses. Spiritualism is therefore the scientific basis of true religion. Without it there is no rational evidence of a future life—all is mere conjecture—and it is alone through spiritual demonstration that the arguments of the Materialist can be rationally met. By the rejection of the evidences of man's continued existence afforded through modern spiritual manifestations, churchmen are foolishly playing into the hands of their opponents, the Atheists and Materialists, who very naturally accuse them of being superstitious for believing in another world without having had any valid evidence of its existence. The latter may reply, we have the evidence of the Bible; but that is fallacious, for that book only contains the testimony of its various writers of what may have been evidence to themselves, but not to others who were not present to see or hear what they saw and heard. Testimony is not proof; it is only secondary evidence. You can disbelieve my testimony, but you cannot doubt my presence here this evening, for you have proof thereof. Let me ask, by your faith, through the testimony of the Scriptures, at all times so firm that no doubts enter your minds, so that you require no proof of immortality? and is your knowledge of the nature of the future life so great that you need no further light regarding it? Then why this aversion to investigate this subject, so as to receive thereby the demonstration of immortality and learn the conditions of the inner life? It is, I maintain, at the time when death steps in and removes the physical presence of our loved ones from our sight that the relative values of a religion founded on mere belief, and one based on actual knowledge, can be truly tested, for while the former fails to supply the consolation which it professes to afford, the latter is found to be "a very present help in time of need."

I've proved them both, I know what's best;
Give me the truth, take all the rest.

The demonstration obtainable through Spiritualism converts that which otherwise would be merely hypothetical into a living reality, and brings the fact of there being a continued existence home to our very senses, transforming hope into knowledge and doubt into certainty.

Many think that Spiritualists are a superstitious lot of people. Surely it is they who believe without evidence that are the superstitious, and not those who have had the fact of there being another world clearly demonstrated to them? and surely the relying on the evidence of one's senses and on the observation of facts does not constitute superstition? Dr. Robert Chambers, of *Chambers' Journal*, writes: "Spiritualism is the germ of the greatest discovery and the greatest revolution of human thought that any age of the world has witnessed.

Instead of being a superstition itself, as some are disposed to think it, they will find it the explanation and the extinguisher of all superstition."

Is it objected to that mediums are not all reliable; was it not the same in Scriptural times? Do we not read of false prophets as well as true prophets? and have we not the authority of the Bible for saying: "O fools and slow of heart," or dull of comprehension, "to believe all that the prophets have spoken?" "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Is it reasonable therefore to reject either ancient or modern spiritual communications because some of them are found to be erroneous? If, on this account, we reject the one, to be consistent we should also reject the other. Let us rather as rational beings accept the true and good in each, and reject the false and bad in both, proving all things, and holding fast to that which is good.

As to the truth of Spiritualism and the reality of spirit manifestations, those who doubt them and who require something to justify their entering upon an investigation thereof, need only refer to history to obtain testimony thereto, for both ancient and modern, sacred and profane history, teem with numerous records of spiritual manifestations; and there is hardly a family in which, at some time or another, one or more members of it have not witnessed some spiritual manifestation. As has been admitted by Dr. Johnson and concurred in by Mr. Adam Clarke, the eminent Bible commentator: "If anything has been tested by facts, if anything has been tested by credible witnesses, the connection and union which blend the spiritual and material worlds have been so tested." No fact in history is better authenticated, I maintain, than that certain individuals, who previously dwelt on earth and who passed through the change called death, have appeared, been recognised, and have communicated with those still in the flesh.

That apparitions of the so-called dead have objectively appeared to many, both in former times and in our own, is established by such an accumulation of testimony that it remains more a matter of unquestionable fact than a subject of discussion.

The movement of pieces of furniture by spirit-agency, which is so frequently held up to ridicule by the opponents of Spiritualism, is only one of its lower phases—the A.B.C., it may be termed, of spiritual phenomena. Insignificant, however, as this may appear, it demonstrates that there is a power which can overcome the law of gravitation, and as absurd as it may seem to non-investigators, it is beyond the capacity of our greatest scientists to explain away this power. When, however, as is frequently the case, intelligence is manifested through the movement of a table, and that intelligence is beyond the knowledge of all present, then the question arises, "Whence comes the intelligence?" If this is asked at the time, the answer generally given (through the movement of the table in connection with the alphabet) is that it comes from some individual who once lived on earth. To the unprejudiced investigator the main point is not the quality of every manifestation, but its reality. Our greatest discoveries, bear in mind, have sprung from trifling things, for, as the poet truly remarks:

"Rivers from bubbling springs

Have rise at first, and great from abject things."

The hypothesis that magnetism or electricity causes the various spiritual manifestations is, to all who have witnessed them, too absurd to merit a moment's consideration, and will continue so until it can be demonstrated that magnetism and electricity can generate rationality, personate a thinking being, and play the part of a sentient, moral agent. One might as reasonably assert that electricity indites the messages received

through the telegraphic wires. And the innumerable other hypotheses which, from time to time, have been suggested to account for the phenomena of modern spiritualism, make a far greater demand on our imagination than does the simple spiritual explanation, than which no other has been found to cover all the phenomena. It must be admitted by all that were magnetism or electricity proved to be the cause of the modern manifestations, then the same hypothesis would likewise explain away the wonderful spiritual phenomena recorded in the Bible.

Some people foolishly object to Spiritualism because, in God's impartiality, the road is open for both good and bad spirits to return; they might as reasonably object to all friendship because some, whom they once considered were friends, have turned out their bitterest enemies. Do they object to the sunlight because of the darkness of the night? or to the rose because it has thorns? Good and bad are merely relative terms, for none are all good and none all bad. Without error we could not perceive the beauty of truth. Perfection implies stagnation, for without imperfection there could be no progression. Those whose aspirations are pure and good, need, however, have no fear of being troubled by the presence of evil spirits, for their society has no attraction for them, like attracting like; and if it is wrong for men to hold communion with spirits now, it must have been equally wrong on the part of Abraham, Peter, Philip, John, etc., to have done so in Biblical times, for there were both good and bad spirits then as now. And further, how can we "try the spirits" if we do not communicate with them? A rational Spiritualist believes not every spirit out of the flesh any more than he does every spirit in the flesh, he values the statements of both on their merits. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Those who say Spiritualism is all the work of evil spirits resemble the Jews who declared that Jesus acted through the power of Beelzebub, the mythical chief of evil spirits. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness."

Because we declare that

"Angels are but men in lighter vesture clad,"

As Socrates observed:

"Wise men think us clever while fools think us mad."

Spiritualism, I may remark, is totally unsuited for those who are untruthful, tricky, dishonest, or hypocritical. It is these classes of investigators that have so frequently brought disgrace on the movement. If, at a séance, the majority present belong to any of the above classes, the spirits attracted thereby frequently overcome the higher influences of those by whom the medium is usually controlled, and false communications or fraudulent manifestations are the inevitable result; hence the numerous exposures so frequently published in the papers, while the other side of the picture seldom, if ever, appears in the columns of the public press; popular misrepresentation of, and repugnance to Spiritualism, is but the natural outcome of this one-sided conduct on the part of the press.

All spiritual phenomena were looked upon in former times as supernatural or miraculous occurrences; they are and have always been the result of natural law; for every spiritual manifestation that has ever taken place has occurred in strict accordance with fixed and inexorable laws. These laws being beyond man's knowledge, the terms supernatural and miraculous have merely been employed to vindicate his ignorance thereof, just as a savage, seeing an aeronaut descend in a balloon from the sky, would probably declare it miraculous, whereas to those who understand it there is nothing miraculous about the matter. "The wonders of one age become the common place facts of the next."

"Spiritualism" I may add, endorses all that is true in science, philosophy, and religion, it recognises a continuous inspiration in man; it aims, through a reverend study of facts, at a knowledge of the laws and principles which govern the occult forces of the universe, of the relation of spirit to matter, and of man to God and the spiritual world. It is thus comprehensive and progressive, leading to true religion as at one with science and the highest philosophy.

Through the revelations of spirit-communion we learn that God is Spirit, filling all space with His infinite presence, "in whom we live, move, and have our being," and not a localised anthropomorphic Deity; that the Spiritual realms consist not of two divisions, but of many mansions or spheres adapted to the various degrees of spiritualisation to which each one attains; that there is no broad path specially made for the majority of God's children and a narrow one reserved for a favored few, but that in the inner-life, as well as in this outward life, God is impartial and the road to happiness is open to all; that there, as well as here, we can only raise ourselves in the scale of being by our own exertions and holy aspirations; that the punishment of the wicked and the joy of the good come from within, not from without; that happiness beyond human conception awaits us all eventually, through purity, wisdom, and love; that the best way to evince our love to God is by aiding and benefitting our fellow men, as He requirereth not the glory of men nor of angels, for all His works glorify Him; that He is infinite Love, therefore He rules by love, causing everything to tend to good, and thereby has decreed the attainment of happiness by all His children. Such are a few of the higher laws of truth and right which spirit-communion has revealed to those who have availed themselves of this grand avenue of knowledge.

It is only prejudice and ignorance that debar most people from enjoying the glorious privilege of spirit-communion, and it is only a matter of time when it will be gladly accepted by all.

To the question frequently asked: What good has Spiritualism done? I reply, it has been the means of proving to many, who formerly denied that there was a life to come, their error, by demonstrating that physical death does not end all, as they had falsely assumed. Through the conclusive evidence that Spiritualism affords some of the most obdurate Materialists have been convinced of man's continued existence in another world. Spiritualism has brought the fact that there is a future life home to many who previously had doubts thereof, and has clearly demonstrated to them that what is termed death is a mere shedding of the outer husk, which is only necessary so long as man remains on the physical plane of life; for "the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

To those who once only hoped that there was another life, Spiritualism has given actual knowledge in place of mere belief. It has been the means of restoring peace of mind to many a doubting one, and of changing the gloom of death into a confident awakening to a higher and better life. It has satisfied the doubts of thousands, if not millions, who could not be reached by the various forms of faith presented by the Churches for their acceptance. It has incited many to good by its pointing out that there is no shirking the responsibility of our acts by trusting in the sufferings or merits of another; that there is no royal road to happiness but by a well-spent life; and that our friends who have passed to the inner-life still interest themselves in our well-being by aiding us in the weaknesses and difficulties of mundane existence. To the true Spiritualist it has substituted the love of God for the fear of God; it has likewise removed the fear of death and the dread of "the Devil," and it has brought heaven to earth by re-uniting us, even when here, with the loved ones gone before. It makes men and women less discouraged at the many trials and disappointments experienced here, causing life and its passing ills to seem trivial compared to the boundless, glorious hereafter. It comforts, encourages, cheers, and soothes the mourner with a blessed knowledge that no theories or mere beliefs can possibly give. It transforms grim death into a beautiful angel of light, soothing all pain, remedying all wrongs, and opening wide the gateway that leads to the better and higher life. It reinvigorates every great and moral truth that has been revealed to mankind. It intensifies all the sublime thoughts and promptings that urge human natures on to a grand and glorious destiny. It disarms death of its terrors, and brings in reality a new heaven and a new earth to all who have realised its sublime truth. It unlocks the door of the sacred temple of inner realities,

It demonstrates beyond doubt the boundless and impartial love of God, the merciful spiritual Father of all, and it brings a comfort and consolation to the sorrowing and broken-hearted which nothing else can supply, for it proves that

"Mind sets not with the sun;
Mind fades not with the day."

And now let me courteously inquire, "Have you, friends, investigated Spiritualism? If your reply be in the negative, let me ask you to suspend your judgment until you have; for to express an opinion on a matter of which you know little or nothing, is to exhibit consummate assumption, which those who have a knowledge of these things can only regard with feelings of pity. Be slow to judge; be not hasty to condemn; be like the noble Bereans commended by Paul, who having heard him, searched if these things were so. Emulate their manly example with reference to this subject. I ask you to take nothing for granted, nothing upon credit; search all things; prove all things; try the spirits, and hold fast only to that which is good; treasure the golden grains of truth; utilise your reason; discard the chaff of error and falsehood, trample them under foot; and, entering upon the investigation of that which a great cloud of witnesses can testify to be a glorious fact, in the spirit of sincere inquiry to know what is truth, your perseverance and efforts will, in due time, be amply rewarded and crowned with success.

Finally, which think you is the most conducive to the moral and spiritual welfare of man, the higher law of truth and right unfolded by Spiritualism, whereby each one's happiness here and hereafter depends upon his own exertions, or the popular teaching of the Churches, that faith in the merits of another and the acceptance of certain dogmas are necessary to secure future rewards and avert endless, consequently irremedial and vindictive punishment in the life to come? Think over this, and let the voice of enlightened conscience decide.

I shall conclude with the following few lines, which came to me, without effort on my part, a few evenings ago, and which explain my sentiments better than I could do unaided. Bear in mind it hath been written: "he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened," "add to your faith knowledge, and to knowledge understanding," "and desire spiritual gifts." For "I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep," or rather of those who have been quickened into newness of life.

I have carried out these wise injunctions, so therefore can truthfully say "I speak that which I know, and testify of that which I have seen;" I have knocked and it hath been opened unto me; I have sought and I have found, whether I am credited or not; and I thank God that I am enabled in all good conscience, and in the words of truth and soberness to say:

I have seen the hills and valleys
In th' beauteous summer land!
I have heard the angels singing
Across the golden strand!
I have grasped the hands of loved ones
Who've only gone before,
And who'll greet me with a welcome
When I reach the other shore.
For years I've held communion
With th' dear ones of my youth,
And from their loving hearts received
Sweet messages of truth.
Our children too, they often write
To tell us of their love
And how they are progressing "in
The angel-home above."
Thus, my hope has changed to knowledge;
All fear of death hath fled;
I know that I shall live again,
Though numbered with the dead;
And that I shall return in love
To those I leave behind,
To guide and comfort them through life,
With counsels wise and kind.
Oh! that I could impart to all
This knowledge of God's love,
Which here we only dimly see,
It shines more clear above.
Thrice happy will the world become
When this great truth is known,
That, as was said of old, we reap
Just as we sow on earth we sow.

Then, trust not in those foolish creeds
For priestly ends devised,
But hearken to the voice within
And by it be advised,
To wisdom you will thus attain,
And then can truly sing:
"O! Grave where is thy victory?
O! Death where is thy sting!"

*. Copies of this in pamphlet form can be obtained at the office of this paper, the proceeds from the sale thereof to go to the building fund of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists.

"DOUBTING THOMAS."

"In the name of the prophet, figs!" Mr. Julian Thomas, who has probably produced more columns of literary slip-slop and impudent egotism than any man of his weight and age, has issued his *ultimatum* on the subject of Spiritualism. He says, "I oppose it root and branch. Phenomena which we cannot account for are caused but by natural laws of which we are yet ignorant." We do not dispute the writer's ignorance of natural laws, which is probably immeasurable; but we are considerably amused by the intrepidity of that ignorance, which extends to phenomena also. He has "many times been present at that pleasant foolery, table turning," and therefore he feels justified to sit down and pronounce a dogmatic opinion upon the higher phenomena of Spiritualism. It is as though some shallow prater should exclaim: "I have looked over the multiplication table. There is nothing in it. Consequently, logarithms, the differential calculus, and the binomial theorem are a mockery, a delusion, and a snare." Of course, anyone is at perfect liberty to draw ridiculous conclusions from a superficial acquaintance with certain premises, but if he ventures to print them, he must expect to see them provoke a hurricane of laughter, if not a storm of derision. When Mr. Thomas is writing about the quality of the whisky he drinks in the course of his erratic wanderings, real or imaginary, we are quite willing to accept his *dictum*. It is a subject with which he is probably well acquainted; but when he takes upon himself to dogmatise concerning something of which he is so ludicrously ignorant as Spiritualism, he exposes himself to the admonition which the Greek artist uttered to the Greek cobbler: "*Ne sutor ultra depidam*"

THE LYCEUM.

WHEN Mr. Charles Bamford was in Melbourne a few weeks since, he alluded to the success of the "Flower" Sundays at the Sydney Lyceum, and suggested their adoption here. Mr. Lang, the Conductor, adopted the suggestion, and appointed Sunday, the 18th, for their inauguration. Accordingly on that day the platform was decorated with floral offerings, and such of the children as had no flower gardens to draw upon were supplied with little bouquets by two lady members of the Lyceum who had collected and arranged them. Mr. Hall, of the Richmond Lyceum, conducted (having exchanged platforms for the day with Mr. Lang), and gave an address on Brotherly Love. There was a large attendance of members, and visitors, and more than usual energy and *vim* thrown into the proceedings. The flowers were subsequently sent to the Hospital.

The Age of May 10th devotes upwards of two columns to a review of Mr. Ingram's "Haunted Houses and Family Traditions of Great Britain," the effort of the reviewer being to prove the phenomena either mundane or subjective, indeed anything but super-mundane or spiritual. In this, however, he is anything but successful, the thread of his argument giving way on account of the strain put upon it. The review concludes with a sneer at Spiritualism, which called forth a rejoinder from a correspondent signed "Skeptic," giving a long list of scientific men who are believers in Spiritualism and the objectivity of ghosts.

The Adelaide Evening Journal of April 23rd gives a circumstantial account of Healing by laying on of hands by an Evangelist named Wood as witnessed by their reporter. Mr. Wood does his work in an unostentatious manner, and heals in the name of Christ, faith in whom is supposed to be an essential requisite, but we know from experience that with *faith* the names of Mahomet, Buddha, or Zoroaster will do as well.

To Correspondents.

Communications intended for this Journal should be written legibly, and on one side of the paper only.

H. J. BROWNE V. JESUS CHRIST.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Although the subject matter of Mr. H. J. Browne's lecture, "Christianity: its Origin and Esoteric Meaning," a reprint of which appeared in the *Harbinger of Light* of May, is by no means new to me, I still consider it a most able compilation of facts, mixed with some fancies, which it was both necessary and useful to submit to free-thinking Spiritualists who have neither the time nor the means of making themselves acquainted with the learned sources and works from which Mr. Browne has borrowed his materials, eminent amongst which are the works of Volney, Dupuis, not to mention those of Godfrey Higgins, and of even more modern and more reliable writers on the subject of astro-theology. Admitting this, however, I by no means am inclined to admit what Mr. Browne says, viz., that "the history of Jesus, between his birth and his death (as recorded in the New Testament), is merely an improved allegorical representation of the sun in his relative position to the stars and the planets in their annual journey;" and equally disinclined am I to endorse the spirit of the poetical quotation:

"Dear Christian brother, thus, your Christ, together with your creed,

I've proved are but a Pagan vine—a growth from Pagan seed."

I, for one, can easily conceive a pure-minded man like Jesus—Christ or no Christ, Messiah or no Messiah—having historically existed in Palestine (say Galilee), and having taught a reformed Judaism, and healed the sick, as Jesus is said to have done, without mixing up these elementary data of his life with Pagan solar worship, which were necessarily tacked to it at a time when it was considered necessary to place a new religious conception on the ruins of the defunct creed of Ancient Greece and Rome. To me it is sufficient to point to the glowing letters of Paul as evidence of there having lived a man like Jesus; and the evidences contained in the Talmudic writings of the first and second centuries of our era to the real historical existence of a Joshua or Jesus, who attempted to be for the Jewish Church what Martin Luther tried to be for the Romish one, are so overwhelming that only one utterly blind to testimony can look upon these authorities, Paul and the Talmud, as futile and of no value. Every honest student of ecclesiastical history will candidly admit that long before, but especially during, the time of Constantine the Great, and after his reign, a host of Pagan religious elements became mixed with the tenets of primitive Christianity, and were afterwards handed down to us as genuine Christianity; and I have lately myself, in a small essay, "A Christmas Carol," shown the error of celebrating the 25th December of the year one, as the true anniversary day of the birth of the Nazarene. But all this, including Mr. Browne's best arguments to the contrary, does not prove that such a man as Jesus never existed on earth, and both Mr. Browne and all the authors from whom he has drawn his information, err most egregiously when they assert that Jesus is not a historical personage. Mr. Denton's and Dr. E. Crowell's conceptions of the life of Jesus are far nearer the mark, and Spiritualists of H. J. Browne's eminence should, in my opinion, have no difficulty in conceiving the possibility, or probability, of the existence of a preaching and healing medium like Jesus, without appealing to the sun, moon, or stars for evidence of his non-existence. What indeed does Mr. Browne and those who adopt his views and reject the historical Jesus gain by their repudiation? They evidently gain nothing, but lose a great deal in losing a human exemplar of such high spiritual development at so early a period of our history; and, therefore, I say, with all due deference to the learning of H. J. Browne, that Jesus was as true and as real a man as the ingenious lecturer on the solar origin of Christianity.

And as H. J. Browne has opened his able discourse with the words:—

"And truth alone, where'er my lot be cast,
In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,
Shall be my end and aim—my glory to the last,"

So I close mine with the family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares: "There is no religion higher than truth."

C. W. ROHNER, M.D.

Tungamah, May 16th, 1884.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

"It is a beautiful belief that ever round our head
Are hovering on viewless wings the spirits of the dead."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—On Sunday evening, the 20th instant, at the usual lecture at the meeting of Spiritualists, and again yesterday evening, the 27th inst., some incidents were brought under our notice, which, if you can find space for them in your organ of our movement, may serve to impart interest to those lectures. Indeed, what I am going to report might induce some of those outside our movement to look in upon us, who have not been in the habit of doing so.

To my story: On the 20th, Mr. Morse chanced to mention in his lecture, in a sort of parenthetical way, that there might be spirits standing by his side, guiding his thoughts.

This suggested to me the thought of looking round amongst the audience to see if clairvoyants were present, who might see them.

Watching my opportunity passed over to Mrs. Boxall, who told me she had seen two spirits standing near to the lecturer.

Last night, the 27th, Mrs. Boxall's report to me received confirmation in two ways.

I spoke to Mr. Morse and told him what I had learned from Mrs. Boxall on the 20th; when he informed me that being at a séance in Melbourne on Monday, the 21st, (i. e., this day last week), he was there informed by spiritual communication who the spirits were by his side during his lecture.

I may further say that Mrs. Boxall's report received the yet further confirmation of the clairvoyant vision of Mrs. Pennington, who on the same evening (the 20th) saw just what Mrs. Boxall described. This I only learned last night (the 27th). Thus, last night, I heard a double confirmation of what I not only heard, but had there and then stated to the audience on the Sunday evening before I had word of month testimony from both the clairvoyants. In the earlier part of the evening, Mrs. Pennington did not see these spirits, but in the latter part she did.

When I mentioned to Mr. Browne last night that spirits had been seen near to him during his lecture, he simply remarked: "O yes, spirits are always about me."

I will only ask my readers if this is not a BEAUTIFUL BELIEF, and assure them I would not report what I did not fully believe, on what I consider sufficient concurrent testimony.

I am, sir, yours obediently,

ROBERT CALDECOTT.

Raglan-st., Port Melbourne,
28th April, 1884.

17th May.

In postscript to the above, which I sent in too late for publication last month, will you, Mr. Editor, allow me to superadd additional confirmations, and three verifications by three gentlemen, of the phenomena I have reported to you, all of whom are well known to, and trusted by, Melbourne Spiritualists.

For the sake of distinction I will class them as A. B. and C.

A. Commercial Chambers,
Collins-street West, 8th May, 1884.

To Mr. Caldecott. Dear Sir,—I have had the pleasure of reading your letter to the *Harbinger*, and as far as

John Angel James being at my right hand shoulder during the time I was speaking, I have had that fully confirmed.

He has spoken to me since the meeting, stating he was there. The other spirits who attended me I have not had confirmed, but hope to do so before long.—Yours truly,
J. N. MORSE.

B.

City of South Melbourne,
16th May, 1884.

To Mr. Robert Caldecott. Sir,—I refer to your announcement at the Sunday evening lecture, at the Masonic Hall, a few Sundays back, that spirits were seen standing by the lecturer (Mr. Morse), and your report to the *Harbinger* that they were also seen standing by Mr. H. J. Browne during his late lecture in the same place.

In verification of such phenomena, I beg to state that many clairvoyants have reported having seen spirits standing by my side, and these reports have been in accord; also that I have been at many séances with Mr. H. J. Browne, and have always found that the clairvoyants were agreed as to the numerous spirits at all times to be seen around him.—Yours truly,
W. C. TOWSEY.

C.

East Melbourne,
May 16th, 1884.

Mr. Robert Caldecott. Dear Sir,—In reply to your enquiry as to whether it is true that mankind are attended by guardian spirits, I have no hesitation in stating that they (as a rule) are.

I have had repeated proof thereof, and have had the same corroborated over and over again by the testimony of clairvoyants, between whom there could be no possibility of collusion.—Yours faithfully,
HUGH JUNIOR BROWNE.

The letters from these three gentlemen speak for themselves, and if you will favour us by finding space for them, I doubt not they would evoke discussion in your columns on that most interesting phase of spiritual phenomena.

Mr. Browne only demonstrates the truths of the orthodox belief in the guardianship of guardian spirits.

My letters to you—"Pelting Spirits" and "Brain Waves"—drew forth (respectively) an extended and interesting correspondence on those subjects. I prognosticate the same results would follow if you will only find space for the letters (short as they are) by these three seriously minded gentlemen.

I am, sir, yours obediently,

ROBERT CALDECOTT.

THEOSOPHY V. SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—My friend Reimers is coming out of his shell, and explains the Theosophic mysteries and miracles, although in a somewhat obscure and intentionally involved manner, still in sufficiently plain terms to be understood by the careful reader who desires to make himself acquainted with the subject under discussion.

It is evident to me that my eagle-eyed friend, with his enormous opportunities of studying spirit phenomena, has been studiously kept in the background for several years past by the leaders of the cause in England, and it is almost time that he should be allowed to give full expression to his views and ideas of the subject of both Spiritualism and Theosophy, as in spite of the errors he may occasionally drop into, Reimers' is a mind of great acuteness, endowed with rare intuitional powers, not to speak of the direct influence exerted upon his highly sensitive brain by spirits of higher spheres.

With respect to Reimers' explanation as to how Mrs. Hollis-Billings' teapot and Mr. C. C. Massey's carte-de-visite and pocket-book were practised into the hands of the respective receivers of the gifts, I do not intend to offer at present any remarks of my own, as it will be necessary for my naturally slow mind to sleep over it for a few nights, still I am inclined to think that there is a good deal of truth in his observations, and that he has

had time enough during the last three years to mature his private views on the subject.

Concerning his other animadversions on the subject of Teetotalism and Vegetarianism, I am perfectly at one with friend Reimers, and I know, partly from personal and partly also from professional experience, that total abstinence from alcoholic beverages and animal food is the greatest mistake out, if applied to all men alike without discrimination. And I am further inclined to believe that, for instance, India would not be at the present time subject to British rule if the Hindoos had been moderately using wine for the last 300 years or so, and if instead of worshipping their cows they had used their flesh as well as their milk, as other sensible humans do all over the world, with so much advantage and benefit to themselves and others.

Verbum sapienti.

O. W. ROHNER, M.D.

Tungamah, May 18th, 1884.

OCCULT OR SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—In regard to the 'teapot' puzzle, I may state in reply to Dr. Rohner that Madame Blavatsky's impressive arguments on will-power concluded (to the best of my recollection) with the request by way of proof on the spot, to Mrs. Hollis-Billing, to wish for something there and then. Thus she (Mrs. Hollis-B.) carried not even this wish into the room, but the teapot—home. Mr. Billing, the husband, belonged already to the Theosophist body, I believe, and was present, and if I remember correctly, Mrs. Hollis laughingly agreed with my suggestion that a Theosophist enjoys the convenience of denying visits of, and intercourse with spirits, and belief in the phenomena at the same time—a most welcome arrangement for gliding through controversies fashionably and smoothly.

In my vain attempt to satisfy my friend Rohner, the following day-dream of a chat between spirit-attendants of Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Hollis before that night occurred to me:

"I should so like to get for my medium that nice teapot she is craving for!" "Oh, I have got it already, my dear; I traced it, and made a 'double' of it, and you have nothing to do but put to-night the desire for it into the brain of your medium at Blavatsky's." "Is there to be a séance?" "O dear no; Madame B. has become such a monster medium by constant contact with other sensitives that her power can be tapped at any time." "But she says it is all will-power." "Yes, a will or willing of power, but not power of will. She does tremendous work by this little dodge of ours, and the number of believing skeptics is grandly swelling by these tactics, for violent conversion is of no good to many, as the looking back on former illusions of matter is distasteful. Fancy the full admission of all the phenomena, but rejecting spirits, how exquisitely blending with the becoming lustre of fashion, with her brilliant arguments against Spiritualism!" "But how will my good medium take the new will-doctrine home with the teapot?" "Never mind, she will get a little shake, and that friend Reimers too; but another shake of a spirit friend's hand next séance will restore peace once more. To make the thing still more telling, fascinating, and funny, that splendid fellow, C. C. Massey, must get a 'licker' too, and carry home a pocket-book, carte-de-visite, and tobacco pouch, and a load of new reflections, and may be little upsets in the chambers of his spirit-temple."

Both spirits rejoice in perceiving that from the earth-plane and the spirit-world pious tricks have to be used to blend antagonistic, quarrelsome, and it may intellectually pugilistic minds towards reverence and adoration of a central Supreme Power, with perhaps final extinction of individual consciousness after the full round of learning and progress.

I know I plunge into a mass of difficulties, and expect even a hasty flight from the battle-field, by daring to question the lasting victory of the Theosophist monopoly, and look to friend Rohner in case of being wounded.

The idea takes hold of my mind that adepts in the body can do the same as spirits out of it, in rare cases, viz., produce manifestations; but if I have to look upon all spirits themselves as shells only, how shall I read those lovely, ungarbled reports of Dr. Nichols, for instance, of the visits of his "shell" daughter, where the joy of a family feast rules over the cold pen of a simple reporter?

On the other hand, the preponderance of Indian spirits in my scores of séances indeed puzzled me on learning of the possible original fountain of the revelations. Could I accept a kind of spiritercraft controlling all the manifestations in face of so many startling results developing from sources void of all perceptible preparation with spiritual head quarters?

The forming of a school, a system in the bewildering volumes of theory, make it a relief—a pause for new breath—and I see sometimes the image of Spiritualism stoutly and brilliantly enframed by Theosophy; but as it expands, the frame will break at the top and reunite with the basis, and Theosophists once more join the general audience, and welcome the return by a good glass of wine, and in regard to mode of life, temperance will be recommended in sermons on temperance. Madame Blavatsky smokes; a fine cigar is a nice mesmeriser for many organisms, agitated by a free flow of reflections. I am tired of a mock-purity and drilling for angelhood by dogmas of tea-totalism and vegetarianism *in extenso*. Since the greatest geniuses use steaks as fuel for their brains and not paper-slips, I can't see the utility of making universal what is doubtless acceptable for some. I shouldn't like to see all the world like a nursery-room with milk, lemonade, or a bottle of sodawater. Let us use all things wisely, but not exclude (save direct poison and adulterated stuff), positively this or that. Everybody should be careful what his inherited and trained constitution wants; then we are better fit to observe phenomena more correctly; and more accumulation of them we need sadly, although we have *not gone half through what has been given*.

"M.A." (Oxon.) is on a gigantic herculean task, "To review past results," and they will include some of mine. Should they, however, as yet stick too fast in oblivion, I shall put a crowbar into the ground and ease the lift. There are too many selfish Spiritualists (so called) who got their share of "miracles" and let the rest alone. To return to the foolish teachings of impossible and ideal purity, which has to dissolve with all animal instincts; likewise perhaps that energy of spirit which shows so grandly in a thunderstorm, where with sweeping clean the air and quickening untold acres into new life, hosts of dear things are destroyed, nay, life sacrificed at the same time. No message of the archangels is delivered to the tunes of flutes and harps only, but trombones and sharp concussions fight against attempts of soft sentimentality.

I don't at all attack the Theosophists "bill of fare" or pure life, as far as I know, but warn against intrusions of capricious ideals, dictating childish restrictions for all. Natures differ. I delivered most telling lectures on the beauties of tea-totalism and vegetarianism after a full-sized steak and a pint of claret; and even now, having taxed my brain on these trying topics, I drop my pen and go in for a sound chop and a cordial, and my readers won't be the worse for it.

If I reflect on the difference between the agencies or powers of the Theosophists' school and our plain Spiritualism, in my imperfect knowledge of either, it strikes me that the adepts can, like spirits proper, rise in thought and action beyond the mortal; whilst the disincarnated spirit can reach from regions where the adept can only peep into partially, the coffin blocking up a wee bit. I admit I risk to blunder sadly in these tricks of fancy, but I can't see such a big difference between Theosophy and Spiritualism, if the manifestations go by and through the same hands—one party having yet the feet on the ground, and the other pushing and tugging from above after certain arrangements on energy of will of mortals and fancy work of "strolling" spirits.

But, in conclusion, I must own that the key-note of my epistle is my desire, as a musician, for harmony

between Theosophy and Spiritualism as partners. Both will be the coming rulers of the world. The question is, shall the firm read, "Spiritualism and Co.," or "Theosophy and Co.?"

Yours truly,

C. REIMERS.

PROOF OF INDEPENDENT SPIRIT ACTION.

THE following excellent test of the independent action of an intelligent spirit appears in the recently published book, "Spirit Teachings," by "M.A." (Oxon.):

"Already several facts and precise records of the life of some spirits had been given. For instance, on May 22nd, I was writing on quite another subject when the message broke off, and the name of Thomas Augustine Arne was written. It was said that he had been brought into relation with me through his connection with a son of Dr. Speer's, a pupil of mine, who displayed great musical ability.

I was at this time greatly impressed with the character of the automatic writing and with the information given. I enquired at once if I could ascertain from Arne through the medium of the spirit Doctor, who was writing, any precise facts as to his life. The request was at once complied with, there being no interval between my question and the reply. The date of his birth (1710); his school (Eton); his instructor in the violin (Festing). His works, or at any rate some eight or nine of them; the fact that "Rule Britannia" was contained in the masque of Alfred; and a number of other minute particulars were given without the least hesitation. Profoundly astonished at receiving such a mass of information, foreign not only to my mind in its details, but utterly foreign to my habit of thought—for I know absolutely nothing about music, and have read nothing on the subject—I inquired how it was possible to give information so minute. It was said to be extremely difficult, possible only when an extremely passive and receptive state in the medium were secured. Moreover, spirits were said to have access to sources of information so that they could refresh their imperfect recollection.

I asked how? By reading; under certain conditions, and with special end in view; or by inquiry, as man does, only to spirits it would be more difficult, though possible.

Could my friend himself so acquire information? No; he had too long left the earth, but he mentioned the names of two spirits accustomed occasionally to write who could perform this feat. I asked that one of them should be brought. I was sitting waiting for a pupil in a room, not my own, which was used as a study, and the walls of which were covered with bookshelves.

The writing ceased, and after an interval of some minutes, another kind of writing appeared. I inquired if the newly arrived spirit could demonstrate to me the power alleged.

Can you read?

No, friend, I cannot, but Zachary Gray can, and Rector. I am not able to materialise myself, or to command the elements.

Are either of those spirits here?

I will bring one by and by. I will send..... Rector is here.

I am told you can read. Is that so? Can you read a book?

[Spirit hand-writing changed.]

Will you write for me the last line of the first book of *Æneid*?

Wait.—"Omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus æstas."

[This was right.]

Quite so. But I might have known it. Can you go to the bookcase, take the last book but one on the second shelf, and read me the last paragraph on the 94th page. I have not seen it, and do not even know its name.

"I will shortly prove by a short historical narrative, that popery is a novelty, and has gradually arisen and grown up since the primitive and pure time of Christianity, not only since the apostolic age, but even since the lamentable union of kirk and the state by Constantine."

[The book on examination then proved to be a queer one, called "*Roger's Antipopeism*," an attempt to liberate and purify Christianity from Popery, Politickirk-ality, and Priesttrule." The extract given above was accurate, but the word "narrative" was substituted for "account"]

How came I to pitch on so appropriate a sentence?

I know not, my friend. It was by coincidence. The word was changed by error. I knew it when it was done, but would not change.

How did you read? You wrote more slowly, and by fits and starts.

I wrote what I remembered, and then I went for more. It is a special effort to read, and useful only as a test. Your friend was right last night; we can read, but only when conditions are very good. We will read once again, and write, and then impress you of a book: "Pope is the last great writer of that school of poetry, the poetry of the intellect, or rather of the intellect mingled with fancy." That is truly written. Go and take the eleventh book on the same shelf. [I took a book called *Poetry, Romance, and Rhetoric*. It will open at the page for you. Take it and read, and recognise our power, and the permission which the great and good God gives us, to show you of our power over matter. To Him be glory. Amen.]

[The book opened at page 145, and there was the quotation perfectly true. I had not seen the book before; certainly had no idea of its contents.]

BUDDHISM.

We extract the following from the *Ballarat Courier* of April 24th:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER.

SIR,—In your issue of 17th April you have inserted (by request) an extract of a paper that was read by the Rev. H. C. Collins, M.A., before the members of the Victoria Philosophical Society, London, wherein he asserts that the life of Christ was plagiarised by the Hindoo sacred writers and accredited to Christ (the Hindoo Saviour) between the first and tenth centuries of the Christian era. H. J. Browne, in his "Rational Christianity," points out quite the reverse, and quotes a number of very eminent authors in support of his view, viz. that the tale of the life of Christ existed hundreds of years before the Christian era, and that consequently it would have been impossible for the Hindoo sacred writers to have copied from us. Now, Mr. Editor, as the book above quoted ("Rational Christianity") is to my knowledge being read by a very large number of the young people of this city, will any of your numerous readers inform me whether the life of Christ of Buddhism (which life so much and so nearly corresponds with the life of Christ) or the life of Christ of the Christians is the most ancient, or where the information can be obtained?—Yours, &c.

ANXIOUS ENQUIRER.

SPIRITUALISM IN BELGIUM.

We have received from Liège, in Belgium, a number of *Le Messager*, a bi-monthly publication, devoted to Spiritualism and Magnetism, which is now in the twelfth year of its existence. It is edited by M.L. Adam, and published by the brothers Pierre, of No. 12, Rue de l'Étuve, in that city. Among its contributors are Dr. Wahn, who is writing a valuable series of papers on the lines of William Howitt's "History of Supernaturalism," M. René Caillie, whose papers on "God and Creation" are full of interest, M. Bussereau, and M. Gabriel Delaune. With the number for the 1st of March are issued two supplements, one of which contains an extract on Spiritualism from the *Nouvelle Encyclopédie Naturelle*, and a memoir of Allan Kardec, from the *Nouveau Dictionnaire Universel*. It is instructive to contrast the contemptuous treatment which Spiritualism encounters in these colonies from shallow sciolists, with the respect it receives at the hands of men of science on the continent. Thus, in the *Nouvelle Encyclopédie Nationale* we read that "Spiritualism is the most sublime expression of the moral sentiments in humanity, the most rational of philosophical conceptions, and under these different titles it is called upon to reunite under its banner, in the near future, the immense majority of the nations of the globe." In the article on Kardec, in the *Nouveau Dictionnaire Universel*, we find it stated that, "The Spiritualistic doctrine, as set forth in his works, contains within itself

the elements of a general transformation of ideas which will lead to the transformation of society. In this point of view it deserves the attention of all the friends of progress. His influence, which already extends over all civilised countries, gives a considerable importance to the personality of its founder, and causes us to foresee that in a future, which is possibly near at hand, he will be regarded as one of the reformers of the nineteenth century."

GLENNINGS.

At the celebration of the sixty-fifth anniversary of the birth of the late eminent American freethinker, Mr. D. M. Bennett, by the Liberals of New York, one of the speakers—Mr. Jay Chappel, editor of the *Golden Age*—having expressed the pleasure he felt at appearing in the hall "dedicated to one of the bravest and noblest men that ever helped to turn back the army of superstition—" proceeded as follows; "Mr Bennett was a Spiritualist. I think it was in the year 1877 that he became thoroughly convinced of the philosophy through Mrs. Lord and Dr. Henry Slade. He recognised the phenomena, and as opportunity offered investigated all its phases. On his return from around the world in 1882 I spent several days with him, and attended during that time a seance with him, and we had much conversation upon that subject. In a private letter written from the Albany prison in 1880, he says, 'I believe that spirits do exist, and that they are organised forms of highly developed and subtilized matter.' In 1878 he wrote me similar words. I say these things because many have thought him a pure Materialist." Some warm words of commendation were uttered, regarding the deceased, as being a true friend of man, of a life noble and pure, and one who fought bravely for human rights. Mr. Hy. Stone said he had known Mr. Bennett for forty years, and knew him to be an honest, pure, and noble man. It is clear that Mr. Bennett was a freethinker in the higher sense of that term, and could have no sympathy with that class who usurp the title, but who only pass from the fetters of a dogmatic theological creed to the fetters of a dogmatic scientific and philosophical creed. We think the name of freethinker will be superseded by a nobler one, that of truthseeker.

Mrs. Moore, and Mr. J. Chantrey Harris, editor of the *New Zealand Times*, have been lecturing in New Zealand, in advocacy of Spiritualism. The latter having complained that "freethinkers" held aloof from Spiritualism, the *Freethought Review* (the last issue of which, by the way, contains some things of great interest to advanced minds, notably the "Religion of the Future," by Hudson Tuttle, quotations from Denton and Ingersoll, and the text of the sentence on Galileo by the Holy Office in 1633 and his recantation,) has some editorial paragraphs commenting on the statement made by Mr. Harris in a manner which only serves to illustrate its truth, since what we regret to have to term the really culpable ignorance and misconception displayed by such comments of the actual position, basis, and claims of Spiritualists, can be but the result of such holding aloof. The writer, indeed, admits the impeachment, but endeavors to justify it by a reference to the great caution which should be exercised in accepting our facts and conclusions. This caution, however, may be and undoubtedly is, often carried to an absurdly illogical extreme. A too prodigious exercise of that intrinsically excellent attribute has stood in the way of many an individual throughout his whole life.

The members of the Scot's Church Literary Association have devoted two evenings of their session to the discussion of Spiritualism, the Rev. Mr. Dods (Mr. Strong's successor) in the chair. The opener of the debate, Mr. Adams, stated a number of objections, which he ultimately complained had not been met, and treated the subject mainly from the stand-point of ridicule. Having set up a patchwork composition formed chiefly of misunderstandings, misinterpretations, imperfect explanations, popular rumors, and newspaper distortions, and called it Spiritualism, he had not much difficulty in levelling his shafts of ridicule against it with apparent effect. A few of the elder members, however, treated

the subject with more gravity, relating some instances within their knowledge of apparitions at the time of death, and suggesting that similar occurrences might form the basis of Spiritualism. Mr. H. J. Browne obtained permission to read a paper on behalf of the subject under discussion on the second evening, and was supported by another Spiritualist. The room adjoining the Scots Church in which the meetings are held was crowded. The debate was very temperately conducted.

A LADY'S MORNING DREAM ON EASTER MONDAY.

I DREAMT that I was standing at night in a garden watching a storm, with my two children, one on each side of me, and papa on my right hand and mamma on my left. The storm was very violent, and made the sky very dark. After the storm passed, the stars came out so brightly as to be dazzling. Then a flock of large white birds passed flying in circles so quickly that each bird looked like a white ring. When they were gone I saw a Being in silvery robes coming down through the air. I said to mamma, "Look, there is an angel!" but papa put his hand on my shoulder and said, "No, child! it is the Holiest of the Holy, Jesus Christ Himself." Now pray, pray as you never prayed in your life before, while your Intercessor is there to hear you." So I knelt down and prayed; and when I rose up papa and mamma were gone, and this Being, whose face had the most beautiful expression I ever saw, was standing close to me. He raised His hand and blessed me and the children, and then I awoke.

PAPA'S INTERPRETATION OF HIS DAUGHTER'S DREAM:

Good dreams are impressed upon us by good spirits, my child, during the silent watches of the night. The hidden meaning of your beautiful dream is as follows:—The garden is this beautiful world that we live in; the night indicates the darkness which still covers the people who dwell therein—a darkness which precedes the glorious dawn which is approaching. The storm is the representation of the many troubles and trials which you, my dear child, have already experienced during your abode in the garden; and the bright, dazzling stars must surely mean the happinesses (*sic*) which have been yours since the storm passed over. The white birds flying in circles are the guardian spirits that are always waiting upon you to inspire you with pure thoughts and lofty aspirations; and your pure thoughts and lofty aspirations have all become concentrated in your beau ideal of everything good and holy—the Holiest of the Holy, Jesus Christ Himself. The injunction to pray, and worship the All-Good and the All-Wise, is quite in accordance with your papa's ideas of what is right and becoming; and no doubt you will find by and bye that your mamma and papa have left you, and gone to dwell with the angels in the Summer-land; but this ideal, this concentration of goodness, and wisdom, and holiness, will remain with you, and will indeed bless you and your children for ever.

AN essay on Magnetic Healing by Mr. Geo. Milner Stephen has just been published by Mr. Joseph Braithwaite of Dunedin. It traces manifestations of the gift from Biblical times to the present day and finishes with a large number of testimonials of permanent cures effected by Mr. Stephen.

THE "Communication" on "Soul Force," &c., which appears in present issue, is the last of the series; at a future time another series may be given. We would refer those who deny that Spiritualism has taught us anything worth acceptance, to the series just completed, for a refutation of their statements.

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